As a result of these efforts about 61 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) of Initial Oil Equivalent Inplace (IOEIP) was accreted in 1997-99.

As far as private/Joint Venture (JV) operations are concerned, contracts were signed for two exploration blocks, namely, KG-ON/1 and KG-OS/6 with private companies during last three years (1997-98 to 1999-2000) in river basin and onshore basins adjoining Bay of Bengal. Also, Government offered a total of 27 blocks under the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) in the river basins and onshore basis adjoining Bay of Bengal of which contracts have been signed recently for 14 blocks.

(d) Exploration activities in Krishna-Godavari basin were started by ONGC in mid sixties. As a result of these efforts about 188 MMT of IOEIP (as on 1.4.99) has been established. Further, as far as private/JV sector is concerned, a gas discovery has been made in Ravva contract area. Exploration work in two earlier signed blocks in K-G basin is in progress. Recently contracts for nine blocks under NELP have been signed for carrying out exploration in this area.

So far as Mahanadi basin is concerned, in the years 1973-75, the erstwhile Oil and Natural Gas Commission had carried out seismic surveys in the areas. During the period 1978-90, OIL carried out extensive surveys in the Mahanadi offshore and onshore areas and in North-East Coast (NEC) offshore area. A total of fifteen exploratory wells had been drilled in these areas. However, no commercial hydrocarbons discovery was made. Recently contract for five offshore blocks under NELP have been signed for carrying out further exploration in Mahanadi and NEC areas.

Conversion of Petrol/Diesel driven vehicles into LPG

3632. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that conversion of diesel driven vehicles, without prior approval has led to unsafe driving and pollution in the country;

(b) what norms have now been laid down by Government for the conversion of petrol driven vehicles to diesel fuelled;

(c) whether Government have also allowed conversion of petrol driven vehicles to LPG fueled without seeking any prior approval by the owners of such vehicles.

(d) if so, the reasoms therefore indicating wpether any prior approval required before undertaking any alternative in motor vehicles; and

(e) by when the Motor Vehicle Act, 1988 would be amended accordingly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) to (e) As intimated by the Miffistry of Surface Transport, under Section 52 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 alteration in motor vehicles for its operation by different types of fuel or source of energy, including battery, compressed natural gas, solar power or any other fuel or source of energy other than liquid petroleum gas is permissible. However, the grant of permission to# use LPG asvan auto fuel is under consideration. The Section also prescribed procedure to be followed by the vehicle owners for making any conversion in the petrol driven vehicles to diesel fuel. No time frame can be given for enacting amendment in the Motor Vehicles Act.

Petrol Pumps and LPG Dealerships in Assam

3633. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of petrol pumps and LPG distributorships functioning in Assam, district-wise, and dealer-wise;

(b) the details of villages covered under the said dealership;

(c) whether Government propose to open such distributorships in the hilly areas of the country, particularly in Assam; and

(d) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E.PONNUSWAMY): (a) to (d) As on 1.10.99, there were 148 LPG distributorships and 368 retail outlet dealership in operation in Assam to meet the fuel requirements of the consumers. In order to meet the increased demand, in addition to the locations pending from the previous marketing plans, 2078 LPG distributorships and 927 retail outlet dealerships have been included in the Marketing plans 1996-98 for the country including for hilly areas. This includes 69 LPG distributorships and 4 retail outlet dealerships for Assam.